



**6712-01**

## **FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

### **Information Collection Being Reviewed by the Federal Communications Commission**

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burden and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 - 3520), the Federal Communications Commission invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection(s). Comments are requested concerning: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and (e) ways to further reduce the information burden for small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees.

The FCC may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. No person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information subject to the Paperwork Reduction

Act (PRA) that does not display a valid OMB control number.

**DATES:** Written Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) comments should be submitted on or before **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**. If you anticipate that you will be submitting PRA comments, but find it difficult to do so within the period of time allowed by this notice, you should advise the FCC contact listed below as soon as possible.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit your PRA comments to Nicholas A. Fraser, Office of Management and Budget, via fax at 202-395-5167 or via Internet at Nicholas\_A.\_Fraser@omb.eop.gov and to Judith B. Herman, Federal Communications Commission, via the Internet at Judith-b.herman@fcc.gov. To submit your PRA comments by email send them to: PRA@fcc.gov.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Judith B. Herman, Office of Managing Director, (202) 418-0214.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**OMB Control Number:** 3060-0986.

**Title:** Competitive Carrier Line Count Report and Self-Certification as a Rural Carrier, WC Docket Nos. 10-90 and 05-337, CC Docket No. 96-45 and GN Docket No. 09-51.

**Form Number:** FCC Form 525.

**Type of Review:** Revision of a currently approved collection.

**Respondents:** Business or other for-profit entities, not-for-profit institutions and state, local or tribal government.

**Number of Respondents:** 3,016 respondents; 3,130 responses.

**Estimated Time per Response:** .5 hours - 8 hours.

**Frequency of Response:** On occasion, quarterly and annual reporting requirements.

**Obligation to Respond:** Required to obtain or retain benefits. Statutory authority for this information collection is contained in 47 U.S.C. Sections 151-154, 201-206, 214, 218-220, 251, 252, 254, 256, 303(r), 403, 405 and 410 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

**Total Annual Burden:** 9,995 hours.

**Total Annual Cost:** N/A.

**Privacy Impact Assessment:** N/A.

**Nature and Extent of Confidentiality:** The Commission is not requesting that respondents submit confidential information. However, respondents may request materials or information submitted to the Commission be withheld from public inspection under 47 CFR 0.459 of the Commission's rules.

**Needs and Uses:** This collection is being submitted as a revision to a currently approved collection. In November 2011, the Commission adopted an order reforming its high-cost universal service support mechanisms. Connect America Fund; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future; Establish Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers;

High-Cost Universal Service Support; Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime; Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service; Lifeline and Link-Up; Universal Service Reform - Mobility Fund, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 07-135, 05-337, 03-109; GN Docket No. 09-51; CC Docket Nos. 01-92, 96-45; WT Docket No. 10-208, FCC 11-161. This revision addresses several reforms adopted in the order. The Commission plans to submit additional revisions to 3060-0986 for OMB review to address other substantial, non-emergency reforms adopted in the order at a later date.

The order provides that existing high-cost support for price cap incumbent local exchange carriers will be frozen at 2011 levels. In addition, the order provides for up to \$300 million annually in incremental support to those carriers, to be allocated by the use of a cost equation. Carriers accepting such incremental funding will be required to meet defined broadband deployment obligations. Eligible carriers will be required to notify the Commission, the Universal Service Fund Administrative Company (the Universal Service Fund Administrator or USAC), as well as relevant state and Tribal authorities the amount, if any, of funds they accept. Carriers accepting funding will also be required to identify the areas to which they will deploy broadband to meet their deployment obligations. Specifically, carriers will be required to provide, in electronic form, the following data for each location to which they intend to deploy broadband in satisfaction of their obligation: latitude, longitude, census block, and wire center.

The order also adopts a rule to reduce, dollar-for-dollar, a carrier's high-cost loop support (for rate-of-return carriers) or Connect America Phase I support (for price cap carriers) to the extent that the carrier's local end user rate plus state regulated fees do not meet a specified urban rate floor. Accordingly, carriers will be required to report, on an

annual basis, the local end user rates that fall below the specified urban rate floor, and the number of lines associated with each rate so that the universal service fund Administrator can calculate reductions in support.

The order also modifies section 54.307 (often called the “identical support rule”) and related rules, which provide that competitive eligible telecommunications carriers receive the same per-line level of support as received by incumbent LECs serving the same areas. As a result, the Commission will be reducing the burdens associated with a number of collections in this control number, including line count filings for competitive ETCs and incumbent LECs serving competitive areas, disaggregation plans (which permit incumbent LECs to target support for the purpose of calculating per-line support amounts), and certifications for carriers serving Tribal lands and Alaska native regions. In addition, the Commission eliminates the “own costs” exception to the interim cap for competitive ETCs. The interim cap limited the total annual amount of high-cost support competitive ETCs in any state could receive to the amount competitive ETCs in that state received in March 2008 on an annualized basis. The “own costs” exception provided that competitive ETCs that showed that they met the support threshold in the same manner as the incumbent LEC would not be subject to the cap. Eliminating the “own costs” exception does not alter the content of this information collection; it does, however, address the terms of clearance in the May 2009 Notice of Office of Management and Budget Action.

The order also revises the certifications that state commissions (or ETCs that are not subject to state jurisdiction) are required to file annually with the Commission and the universal service fund Administrator to ensure that carriers use universal service support

“only for the provision, maintenance and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended” consistent with section 254(e) of the Act. The existing certifications are prospective only. Although the existing certifications are prospective only, the revised certification will ensure that carriers not only will use support in the next year for the intended purposes, but also have used support in the prior year for the intended purposes.

The order also eliminates eligibility for Safety Net Additive support for costs incurred after 2009. Accordingly, this collection is being revised to eliminate the requirement that carriers notify the Commission and USAC that they qualify for Safety Net Additive Support.

The order also eliminates the distinction between “rural” and “non-rural” carriers. Therefore, this collection is being revised to eliminate the reporting requirements for self-certification as a rural carrier.

The Order also moves the recordkeeping requirement from 47 C.F.R. § 54.202(e) to new 47 C.F.R. § 54.320. It also increases the required document retention period from five to ten years and makes clear that carriers are subject to random compliance audits and other investigations and must make all documents and records available to the Commission, any of its Bureaus or Offices, the universal service fund Administrator, and their respective auditors.

Finally, during the review process, the Commission determined that the reporting requirements of OMB Control Number 3060-0894 should be eliminated. The order eliminated the rate comparability review and certification as well as the certification letter

accounting for receipt of federal support in OMB Control Number 3060-0894. These requirements are duplicative of the certification pursuant to section 254(e) of the Act, which is contained in the instant OMB Control Number. Upon OMB approval of this revision, the Commission will voluntarily discontinue OMB Control Number 3060-0894.

Federal Communications Commission.

Bulah P. Wheeler,

Deputy Manager,

Office of the Secretary,

Office of Managing Director.

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